



JOHNNY ISAKSON

UNITED STATES SENATOR • GEORGIA



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Isakson: Clean Air Legislation Includes Health, Economic Benefits for Georgia *Introduces Augusta Mayor Young to Senate Subcommittee*

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Johnny Isakson (R-GA) today voiced his support for the Bush Administration's proposal to rewrite the Clean Air Act, saying it will help the environment and the economy and will be good for Georgia.

Isakson, a member of the Senate Subcommittee on Clean Air, Climate Change and Nuclear Safety, agreed with President Bush that the Clear Skies Act of 2005 would provide billions of dollars in economic benefits, save millions of dollars in health care costs and increase by millions the number of people living in areas that meet new, more stringent health-based national air quality standards.

Specifically for Georgia, the Clear Skies bill would reduce emissions of sulfur dioxide by 89 percent, nitrogen oxide by 77 percent and mercury by 76 percent, Isakson said.

"Annual savings and positive impact in terms of health would be \$5.3 billion and there would be 1,500 less hospital visits a year (in Georgia)," Isakson said. "That's meaningful."

The legislation also would allow many of Georgia's counties that are currently classified as "non-attainment" to be designated as "transitional" provided they produce a plan showing they will meet air quality standards by 2015. This designation is key to continued economic growth and development in those counties, Isakson said.

"That is a tremendously positive step for my state and many others," Isakson said. "It is a meaningful positive step for many of us in the South to address what has clearly been a problem."

Isakson also introduced Augusta Mayor Bob Young, who told the Subcommittee that air quality regulations play a big role in the ability of cities such as Augusta to attract industry.

"In my years in the state legislature and my years since I've been in Congress, I've known Bob Young to be very conscientious and very hardworking, particularly interested in the environment and its impact," said Isakson. "It's a real pleasure to have the opportunity to introduce a great mayor and a great citizen of the State of Georgia."

"If a community is not in attainment, businesses know that to get the necessary air permits might be difficult and sometimes it just makes sense to seek out another community to build in," Young testified. "These factors can have a major impact on jobs and job creation."

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